



Everything New Orleans

New Orleans police monitor's office hires veteran New York lawyer

Published: Monday, March 21, 2011, 6:21 PM Updated: Monday, March 21, 2011, 6:24 PM



By **Brendan McCarthy, The Times-Picayune**

A veteran New York attorney with a background in law enforcement oversight was named Monday to the top deputy position in the **city's police monitor's office**.



Simone Levine, 35, will review complaints, lead investigations, and oversee day-to-day operations as the No. 2 official in the office of police monitor Susan Hutson.

Levine most recently worked as an assistant attorney general for the state of New York, prosecuting criminal cases involving fraud and public integrity matters. She previously served as counsel for two members of the New York state Senate, as well as an attorney for indigent criminal defendants in New York City.

Hutson lauded Levine's experience and her work, noting that it particularly focused on the arena of police oversight and misconduct.

Levine will earn an annual salary of \$90,000 and is set to start on April 4. Hutson said she is "counting down the hours" till Levine joins the office.

The U.S. Department of Justice's recent scathing assessment of the NOPD's operations has underscored the monitor's mission and signaled the long road to reform that lies ahead.

The office will play a role in the impending discussions and negotiations between city and federal officials as they work towards a federal consent decree, which will mandate police reforms.

Levine, a graduate of McGill University in Canada and the University of Connecticut School of Law, has drafted legislation regarding government ethics, police stops and searches, as well as whistleblower protections, according to Hutson's office.

She was a lead organizer for the National Lawyer's Guild and played a key role in protecting the rights of citizens who protested the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York City, according to press

reports. That position made her the "public face" of the left-leaning group, which represented hundreds of arrestees, according to a 2004 profile in The New York Times.

Levine, the daughter of a social worker and a business consultant, grew up in Ridgefield, Conn., and was drawn to issues of racism and police brutality after seeing racial and economic inequalities in some of the state's more hard-scrabble cities, according the Times profile. She is a fluent Spanish and French speaker and an amateur boxer.

.....

*Brendan McCarthy can be reached at **bmccarthy@timespicayune.com** or 504.826.3301.*

© 2011 NOLA.com. All rights reserved.